

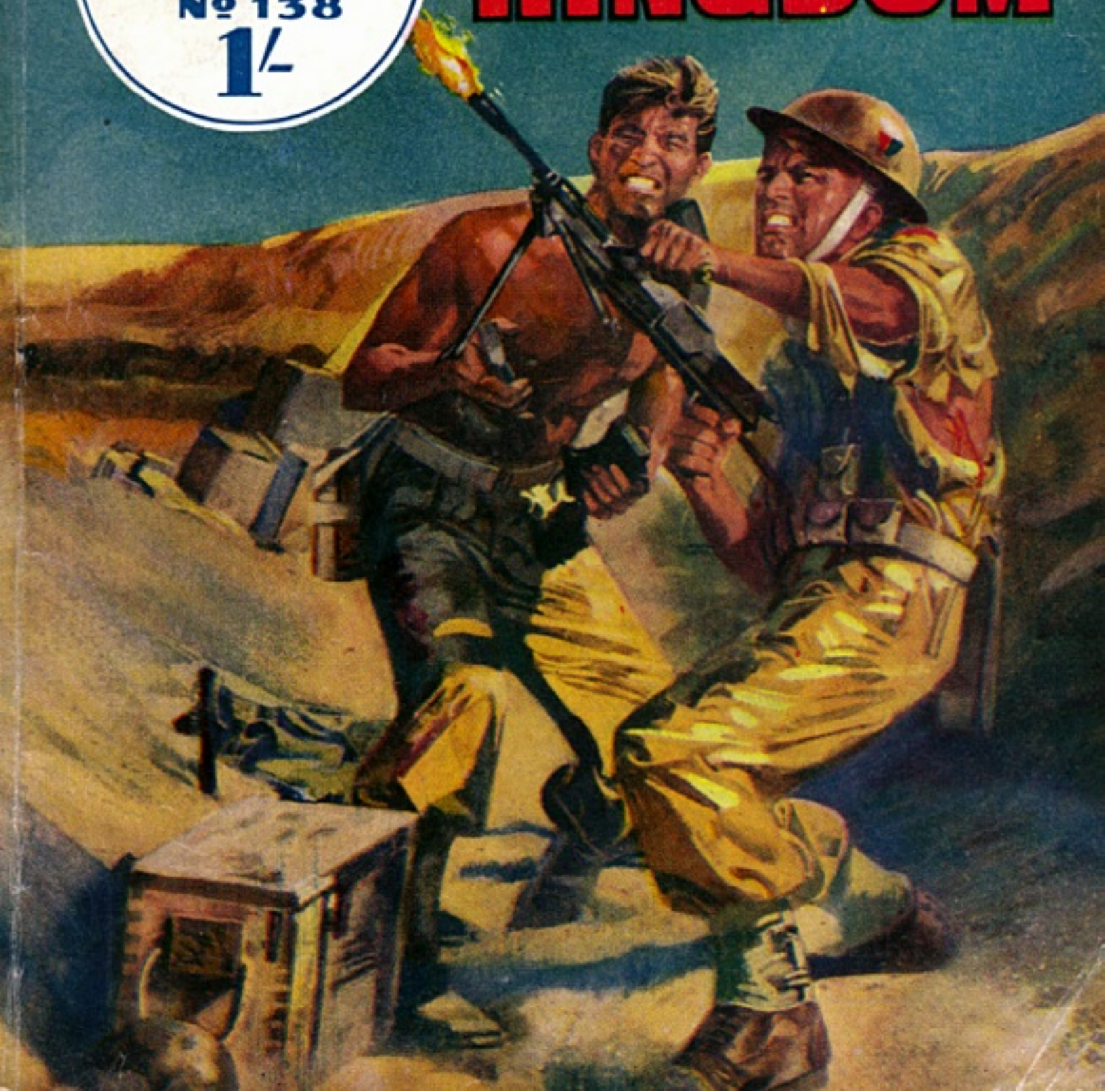
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DUFFY'S KINGDOM



LOOK!

THESE
TWO
TERRIFIC
ISSUES
NOW
ON
SALE



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**NELSON
TOUCH**



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Duffy's Kingdom

EAST OF THE BENGHAZI PENINSULAR LIES THE VAST TRACT OF PITILESS DESERT KNOWN AS THE GREAT SAND SEA. SOMEWHERE IN THAT SAVAGE WILDERNESS THERE IS A DEEP VALLEY HARBOURING A SMALL OASIS. A TRIBE OF SIMPLE DESERT PEOPLE LIVE IN THAT ISOLATED SPOT AND ABOVE THEIR CRUDE DWELLING PLACES FLUTTERS A TATTERED, FADED UNION JACK.



THE FEW BRITISH SOLDIERS WHO FOUGHT IN THIS UNCHARTED PLACE WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER IT AS - DUFFY'S 'KINGDOM'...

Chapter 1. *Heat of Battle*

IT BEGAN IN 1941. IN THE FURNACE HEAT OF THE LIBYAN DESERT, A BRITISH REGIMENT OF TANKS MOVED UP FOR YET ANOTHER BITTER CLASH WITH ROMMEL'S ADVANCING PANZERS...



AHEAD OF THE CRUSADERS, THE FORAGING ARMoured CARS FILTERED BACK URGENT REPORTS TO THE TANK UNIT C.O...

ABLE LEADER TO ALL TANKS!
RECONNAISSANCE REPORTS
ENEMY MARK FOURS TWO
MILES AHEAD! ADVANCING
TO MEET US...!



ORDERS CRACKLING BRASSILY OVER THE WIRELESS NET, THE BRITISH TANKS SWUNG NEATLY INTO LINE. ALREADY, THE CREWS COULD SEE THE RESTLESS PLUME OF SAND-CLOUD THAT MASKED THE ADVANCING GERMAN ARMOUR...

OUR ONLY CHANCE IS TO GET IN CLOSE! THOSE MARK FOUR'S COULD BLAST US TO SCRAP-IRON WHILE WE'RE STILL OUT OF RANGE..!



THE FIRST GUN COUGHED VICIOUSLY, BUT THEY WERE GERMAN SHELLS THAT CLEAVED THE AIR - TO SAVAGE THE DESERT AMONG THE ADVANCING CRUSADERS...



KEEP GOING!
WE'VE GOT A
LONG WAY TO
GO YET..!

NOW THE GERMAN TANKS BEGAN TO EXERT THEIR SUPERIOR POTENTIAL OF DEATH. A STUBBY CRUSADER WAS TORN APART, THEN ANOTHER... AND ANOTHER...



ONE OF THE FIRST TO BE HIT WAS THE CRUSADER COMMANDED BY LIEUTENANT SAM MARTIN. SOMEHOW, HE AND HIS CREW JUMPED TO SAFETY FROM AN INFERNO OF FLAME AND EXPLODING AMMUNITION...

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, SIR?

WE'LL BE OKAY, SERGEANT! KEEP GOING... AND GOOD LUCK!



SERGEANT CON DUFFY GRINNED AND CALLED THROUGH THE TANK'S INTERCOM TO HIS DRIVER, 'WINDY' GALE...

ALL RIGHT, WINDY, ME BOY! TWO TROOP IS DOWN TO ONE FIGHTING CREW... AND THAT'S US! SO LET'S GET IN THERE..!



SOME OF THE SURVIVING CRUSADERS WERE SLOWING DOWN TO BRING THEIR TWO-POUNDERS INTO LIFE. BUT CON DUFFY'S TANK WAS BUTTING FORWARD.



HOLD YOUR FIRE, BEEF! WE'LL HAVE TO GET IN REAL CLOSE TO STAND A CHANCE OF EVEN DENTING THEIR EVIL HIDES!

'BEEF' BONE, DUFFY'S LEAN, LONG-LEGGED GUNNER, MOANED FRETFULLY OVER THE INTERCOM. BUT HE SAT TIGHT AS WINDY GALE BEGAN TO WEAVE THROUGH THE PATTERN OF EXPLODING SHELLS.

YOU'RE THE BOSS, DUFF! I SUPPOSE THIS IS AS GOOD A DAY AS ANY TO PLAY TAG WITH A MARK FOUR!



IN WINDY GALE'S COOL HANDS, THE CRUSADER SLEWED CRAZILY THROUGH THE THICKENING BARRAGE OF GERMAN SHELLS - UNTIL EVEN CON DUFFY DECIDED THEY WERE CLOSE ENOUGH...

OKAY, DRIVER! SLOW DOWN! GUNNER... PICK YOUR TARGET! ARMOUR PIERCING... FIRE!

YOU QUITE SURE THIS IS CLOSE ENOUGH, DUFF? AFTER ALL, WE STILL CAN'T SEE THE WHITES OF THEIR EYES!



BEEF BONE'S VOICE WAS PETULANT, BUT HE WAS ONE OF THE BEST GUNNERS IN THE REGIMENT. HIS TWO-FOUNDER RECOILED SUDDENLY. IT'S SOLID SHOT PUNCHED THROUGH THE TURRET OF A LUMBERING PANZER...

GOT HIM! TRAVERSE LEFT! THERE'S ANOTHER!



IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE, CON DUFFY WAS NEVER ONE TO KEEP HIS HEAD DOWN. BUT AS HE FLUNG BACK THE HATCH ON HIS TURRET...

WOW! THE DEVIL! BEEF! HIT THAT BLIGHTER WHERE IT HURTS... BEFORE HE DOES US A MISCHIEF!



AGAIN, THE CRUSADER'S GUN BARKED. THE TRACK OF A MARK FOUR WHIPPED UP AS IT SHATTERED. WINDY GALE'S ANXIOUS VOICE CUT ACROSS DUFFY'S YELP OF TRIUMPH...

A BEAUTIFUL SHOT! PICK OUT ANOTHER, BEEF, ME DARLIN' BOY!

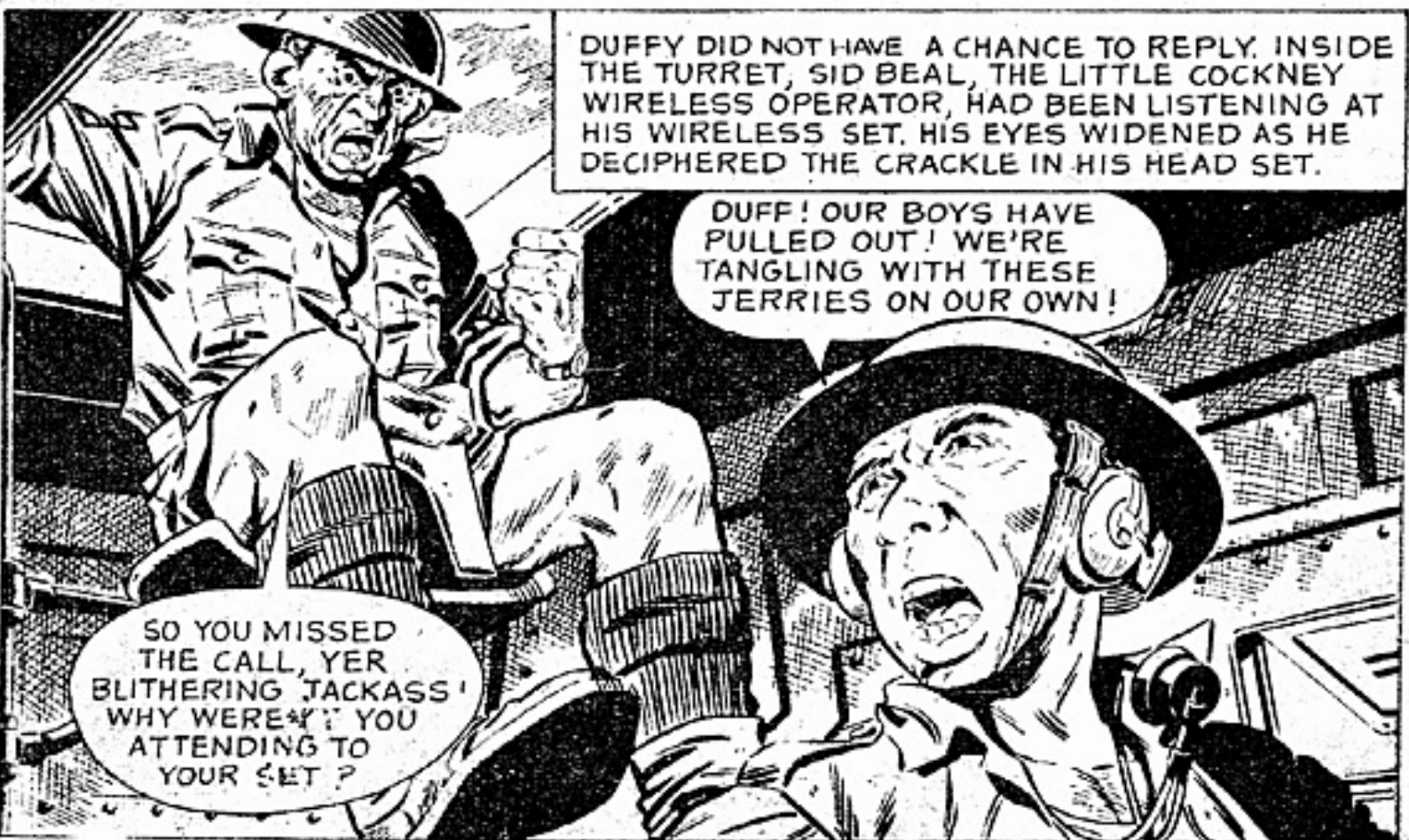
HEY, DUFF! ARE WE FIGHTING THIS LOT ON OUR OWN? I HAVEN'T SEEN A SIGN OF THE OTHERS!



DUFFY DID NOT HAVE A CHANCE TO REPLY. INSIDE THE TURRET, SID BEAL, THE LITTLE COCKNEY WIRELESS OPERATOR, HAD BEEN LISTENING AT HIS WIRELESS SET. HIS EYES WIDENED AS HE DECIPHERED THE CRACKLE IN HIS HEAD SET.

DUFF! OUR BOYS HAVE PULLED OUT! WE'RE TANGLING WITH THESE JERRIES ON OUR OWN!

SO YOU MISSED THE CALL, YER BLITHERING JACKASS! WHY WERE YOU ATTENDING TO YOUR SET?



SID-BEAL WAS A SMALL MAN. BUT THERE WAS A LOT OF TEMPER PACKED INTO HIS WIRY, RAWBONED FRAME...

WHY WASN'T I AT ME -- ! BECAUSE YOU TOLD ME TO LOAD FOR BEEF ! AND IF YOU'D BEEN WEARING YOUR EARPHONES, YOU WOULD HAVE CAUGHT THE MESSAGE YOURSELF !

EARPHONES ? OH... AYE ! AH, SURE IT'S AN AWFUL COD WEARING THOSE THINGS ! I JUST CAN'T FIGHT PROPERLY WITH ALL THAT WIRE ABOUT !



THE CRUSADER LURCHED TO THE CONCUSSION OF A GERMAN SHELL. IGNORING THE GIANT PRESSURE-SMACK, WINDY GALE SPOKE SCATHINGLY INTO HIS HEAD-SET...

I HATE TO BREAK UP THIS ARGUMENT, BUT I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO KNOW THAT WE'RE JUST ABOUT SURROUNDED BY JERRIES ! ALL I ASK IS THAT YOU TELL ME WHICH WAY TO GO..!



DUFFY'S HEAD JERKED OUT THROUGH THE HATCH AGAIN. A QUICK GLANCE TOLD HIM THAT THE ODDS WERE JUST A LITTLE TOO TOUGH... EVEN FOR HIM...

ALL RIGHT, WINDY! TAKE HER ROUND! WE'D BEST BE GETTIN' BACK TO THE OTHERS!

THANK YOU, SERGEANT!
THANK YOU FOR THAT
SWIFT, CLEARCUT AND
INSTANTANEOUS
DECISION!

LUMME!
'ARK AT 'IM!

STILL ARGUING BITTERLY
AMONG THEMSELVES, THE
CREW OF DUFFY'S
CRUSADER SCUTTLED
FROM THE BATTLEFIELD...

WHO THE HECK LANDED ME WITH A
MAD IRISHMAN FOR A COMMANDER...?
AND ONE WHO CAN'T MAKE HIS
FLAMIN' MIND UP, AT THAT!

NOW HOLD
YER REBEL TONGUE,
SID BEAL!

COR! JUST TO
THINK THAT WE WERE
OUT THERE ON OUR
OWN IS ENOUGH TO MAKE
A MAN WANT TO CURL
UP AND DIE!

Chapter 2. *The Trap*

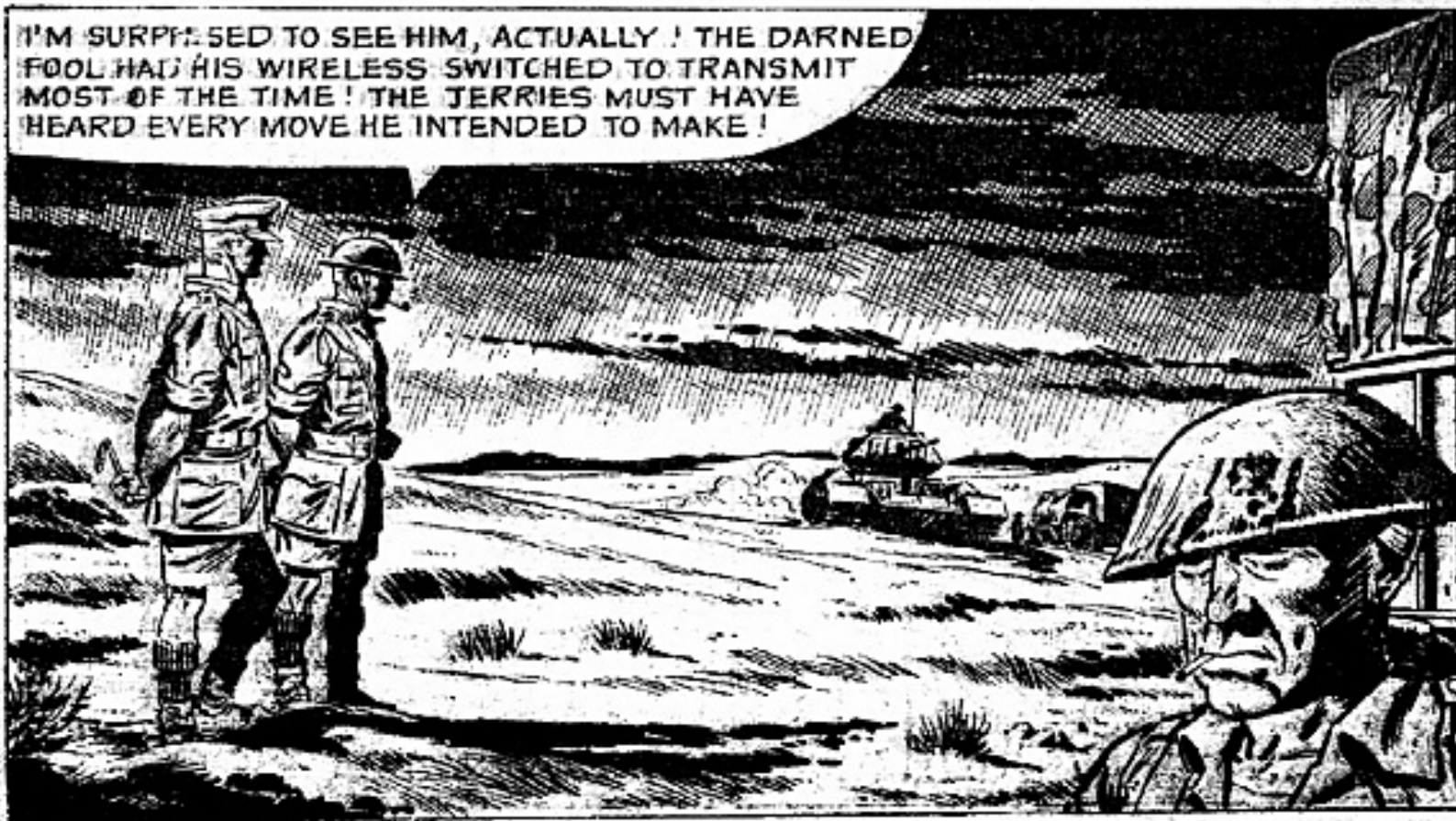
RETIRING HURRIEDLY TO LICK THEIR WOUNDS, THE SURVIVING CRUSADERS SOON OUTSTRIPPED THE SLOWER GERMAN TANKS. THE SUDDEN DESERT NIGHT FOUND THE SAVAGED BRITISH REGIMENT HUDDLED THANKFULLY IN A LEAGUER...

ANOTHER TANK'S JUST COMING IN, SIR!

IT MUST BE SERGEANT DUFFY'S. EVERYONE ELSE IS ACCOUNTED FOR..!



I'M SURPRISED TO SEE HIM, ACTUALLY! THE DARNED FOOL HAD HIS WIRELESS SWITCHED TO TRANSMIT MOST OF THE TIME! THE JERRIES MUST HAVE HEARD EVERY MOVE HE INTENDED TO MAKE!



THE COLONEL HAD BEEN IN THE DESERT SINCE EARLY 1941. THE YOUNG OFFICER BESIDE HIM HAD NOT YET DEVELOPED HIS SUPERIOR'S SEASONED ATTITUDE TO WAR AND THE MEN WHO FOUGHT IT...

I KNOW I HAVEN'T BEEN WITH THE UNIT LONG, SIR, BUT SERGEANT DUFFY DOESN'T MEET MY IDEAL OF THE EFFICIENT COMMANDER!

EFFICIENT? NO... I SUPPOSE EVEN DUFFY'S BEST FRIENDS COULDN'T ACCUSE HIM OF

THAT! HE AND HIS ROGUES HAVE CAUSED ME MORE HEADACHES THAN ANY OTHER CREW IN THE REGIMENT!



BUT DUFFY IS A FIGHTER... FROM THE ROOTS OF HIS RED HAIR TO THE SOLES OF HIS SIZE ELEVEN BOOTS! IT'S DIFFICULT TO THINK OF BEING SCARED WHEN DUFFY'S AROUND! MAYBE THAT'S WHY HE AND HIS CREW HAVE KNOCKED OUT MORE PANZERS THAN ANYONE ELSE!



AT THAT MOMENT, THE OBJECT OF THE COLONEL'S PRAISE WAS LOWERING HIMSELF STIFFLY TO THE GROUND...

OOH! ME POOR BACK! WHY DO THEY BUILD THESE JOBS FOR MIDGETS! IT'S THE CONTORTION ACT FOR ME EVERY TIME I GET IN AND OUT!

BUILD ONE TO SUIT YOUR SIZE, DUFFY... AND WE'D BE THE EASIEST TARGET IN THE DESERT!



BEFORE WE FUEL UP, LET'S SEE IF WE CAN SCRUNGE SOME CHAR!

IT WAS THEN THAT THEY SAW THE SUPPLY LORRY PARKED NEARBY. A SOLDIER, SIPPING TEA WAS SQUATTING ON THE RUNNING BOARD...

GOT A SPARE CUPPA TEA FOR SOME FAGGED-OUT HEROES, MATE?

SURE, BLOKES! PLENTY OF TEA! MATTER OF FACT, I'VE GOT PLENTY OF EVERYTHING!



THE SOLDIER'S LAST WORDS INTRIGUED THE TANKMEN. MOMENTS LATER, AS HE SIPPED GRATEFULLY AT THE SCALDING TEA, CON DUFFY REMEMBERED THEM...

SURE, I DON'T REMEMBER SEEING YOU AROUND HERE BEFORE, LADDIE?

NO, SARGE! I LOST MY WAY TRYING TO FIND MY UNIT! I'VE GOT THEIR SUPPLIES IN THERE! BEER, FAGS.. ALL THE COMFORTS OF HOME!



SECONDS LATER,
DUFFY'S CREW WERE
GATHERED, WIDE-EYED,
AT THE REAR OF THE
SUPPLY LORRY...

ARRAH, SURE IT'S
ENOUGH TO MAKE A MAN'S
MOUTH WATER! LOVELY...
COOL BEER AND THOSE
BEAUTIFUL COMPO
RATIONS.

SERGEANT
DUFFY...!



THE TANKMEN TURNED RELUCTANTLY TOWARDS
THE URGENT VOICE. LIEUTENANT SAM MARTIN
WAS GRINNING AT THEM...

I'M SORRY,
BOYS, BUT I MUST ASK YOU TO
ATTEND TO YOUR VEHICLES! WE
NEED EVERY TANK LAID ON
FOR ANOTHER
ATTACK AT FIRST
LIGHT
TOMORROW!

NO PEACE
FOR THE
WICKED!

RIGHTO,
SOR!



FOR THE NEXT HOUR, DUFFY AND HIS MEN TOILED OVER THEIR BATTLE-SCARRED CRUSADER, FILLING THE FUEL TANKS, AND RESTOCKING THE AMMUNITION IN THE GUN TURRET. THEY WORKED QUICKLY, OBLIVIOUS TO THE NIGHT CHILL...



AT LAST THE JOB WAS DONE. BEEF BONE'S EYES STRAYED TO THE SUPPLY TRUCK...

I COULD JUST GO ONE OF THEM BOTTLES OF THIRST-QUENCHER IN THERE!



DON'T TORTURE YERSELF, ME LAD! YOU KNOW THAT DRIVER CAN'T BE HANDIN' OUT ANOTHER UNIT'S RATIONS...

DETECTEDLY, THEY ROLLED THEMSELVES IN THEIR BLANKETS. ALL THAT IS, EXCEPT DUFFY. THE BIG IRISHMAN WAS GRINNING AGAIN...

WHEN HE GOES TO SLEEP, WE COULD SORT OF LIGHTEN HIS LOAD A LITTLE...

NO.. YOU CAN'T EXPECT THE DRIVER TO HAND THAT STUFF OUT! BUT MAYBE

I BET HE DON'T EVEN GO TO SLEEP! HE'S PROBABLY BEEN WARNED ABAHT THIEVING BLOKES LIKE US!

SID BEAL WAS RIGHT. THE LORRY DRIVER KNEW WELL THE TEMPTATIONS HIS ATTRACTIVE LOAD HELD...

ALL THAT SMASHING GEAR!

IF ONLY HE'D GET TIRED...!

IT'LL BE DAYS BEFORE OUR SPECIAL RATIONS COME THROUGH!



BUT, AT DAWN, THE SUPPLY TRUCK WAS FORGOTTEN. BATTLE PLANS HAD BEEN DISCUSSED AND THE TROOP LEADERS HAD BRIEFED THEIR CREWS. ONCE AGAIN, IN THE FIRST RAW LIGHT, MEN CLIMBED INTO THEIR CRUSADER TANKS...



LIEUTENANT SAM MARTIN MADE A FINAL ROUND OF THE TANKS UNDER HIS COMMAND...

GOOD LUCK, DUFFY - AND GOOD FIGHTING!

SAME TO YOU, SOR! WE'LL STOP THE GOOSE-STEPPIN' SPALPEENS TODAY!



ONE BY ONE THE TANKS LURCHED OUT INTO THE FIERCE RED AND YELLOW DAWN...

HERE WE GO THEN, LADS, PREPARED TO DO OR DIE IN OUR GALLANT DETERMINATION TO STEM THE NAZI HORDES!

ERE! CUT OUT THE OLD CODSWALLOP, SARGE!



WINDY GALE THREW A LAST LINGERING LOOK AT THE SUPPLY TRUCK...

IT BREAKS MY BLOOMIN' HEART TO LEAVE THAT LITTLE LOT!

SHUT UP, WINDY... THE RADIO WASN'T PUT IN TO CATER FOR YOUR IDLE CHAT!



BUT CON DUFFY
HIMSELF
FELT A
FLEETING
MOMENT OF
REGRET...

... STILL IT DOES SEEM A CRYIN'
SHAME, AN' ALL! FOR WHO'S
MORE ENTITLED TO A LITTLE
THAN US POOR
SPALPEENS?



AN HOUR LATER, THE FIFTEEN CRUSADERS THAT HAD SURVIVED THE PREVIOUS DAY'S BATTLE WERE ROLLING UP TO THE MOUTH OF A DEEP WADI. HARD EYES STARED FROM THE CREST OF THE ESCARPMENT AHEAD OF THEM...

THE BRITISH
ARE COMING, HERR
GENERAL!

I HAVE EYES, DOLT! HIMMEL... WE
HAVE A SURPRISE IN STORE FOR
THEM, HEIN?



THE GERMAN COMMANDER'S EYES STRAYED COLDLY TO THE WAITING PANZERS RANGED EACH SIDE OF THE WADI...



THEY CANNOT KNOW THAT TWO MORE PANZER REGIMENTS HAVE LINKED UP WITH US DURING THE NIGHT! THEY ARE RUNNING STRAIGHT INTO A TRAP!

THE TRAP WAS WELL LAID IT'S CUNNING LURE OF TEN GERMAN MARK IV TANKS MOVING SLOWLY ACROSS THE SKYLINE...

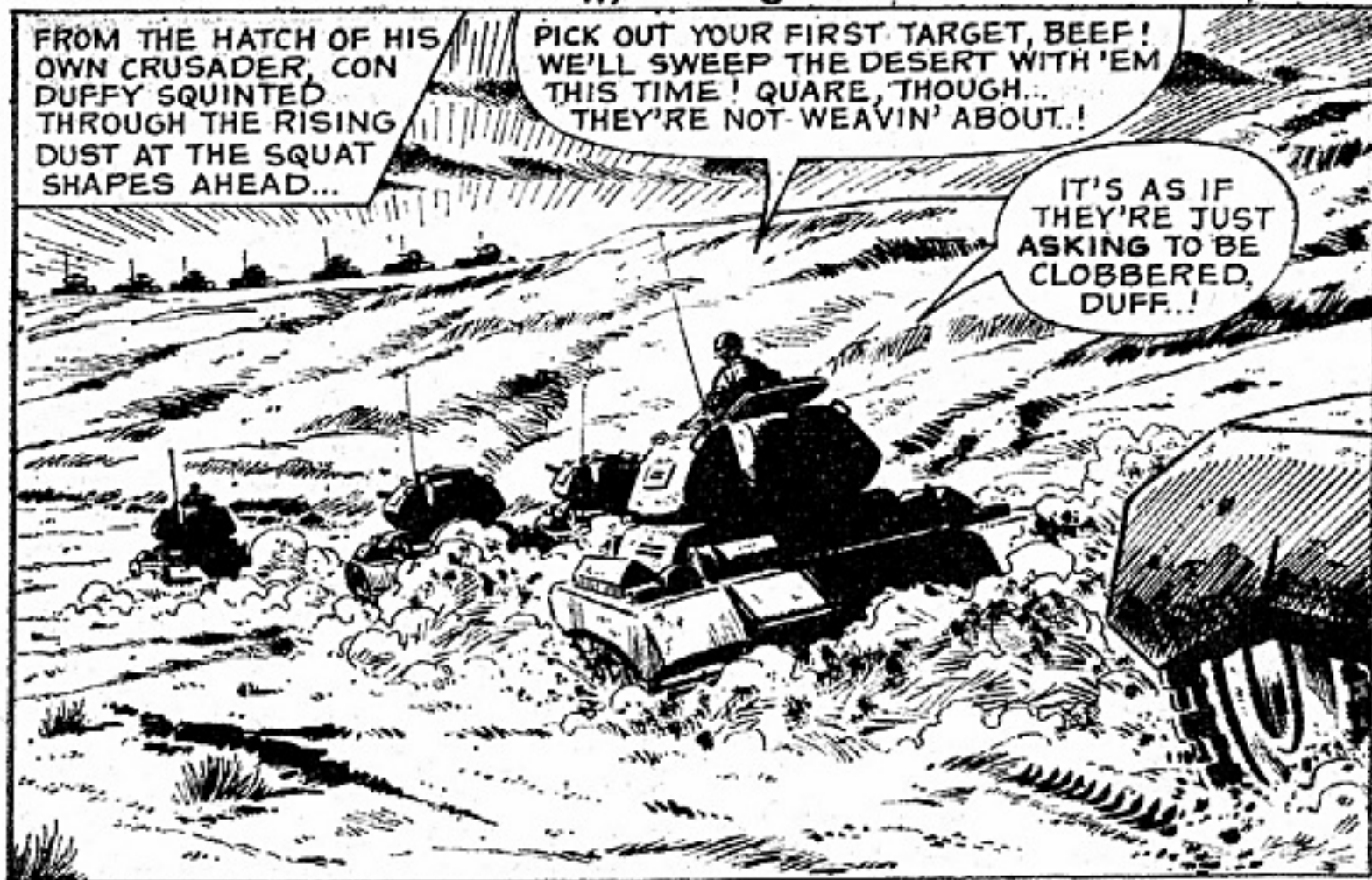
THERE THEY ARE, SIR... WAITING TO BELT US AS SOON AS WE COME WITHIN RANGE! BUT THEY'RE NOT AS STRONG AS THEY WERE YESTERDAY!



FROM THE HATCH OF HIS OWN CRUSADER, CON DUFFY SQUINTED THROUGH THE RISING DUST AT THE SQUAT SHAPES AHEAD...

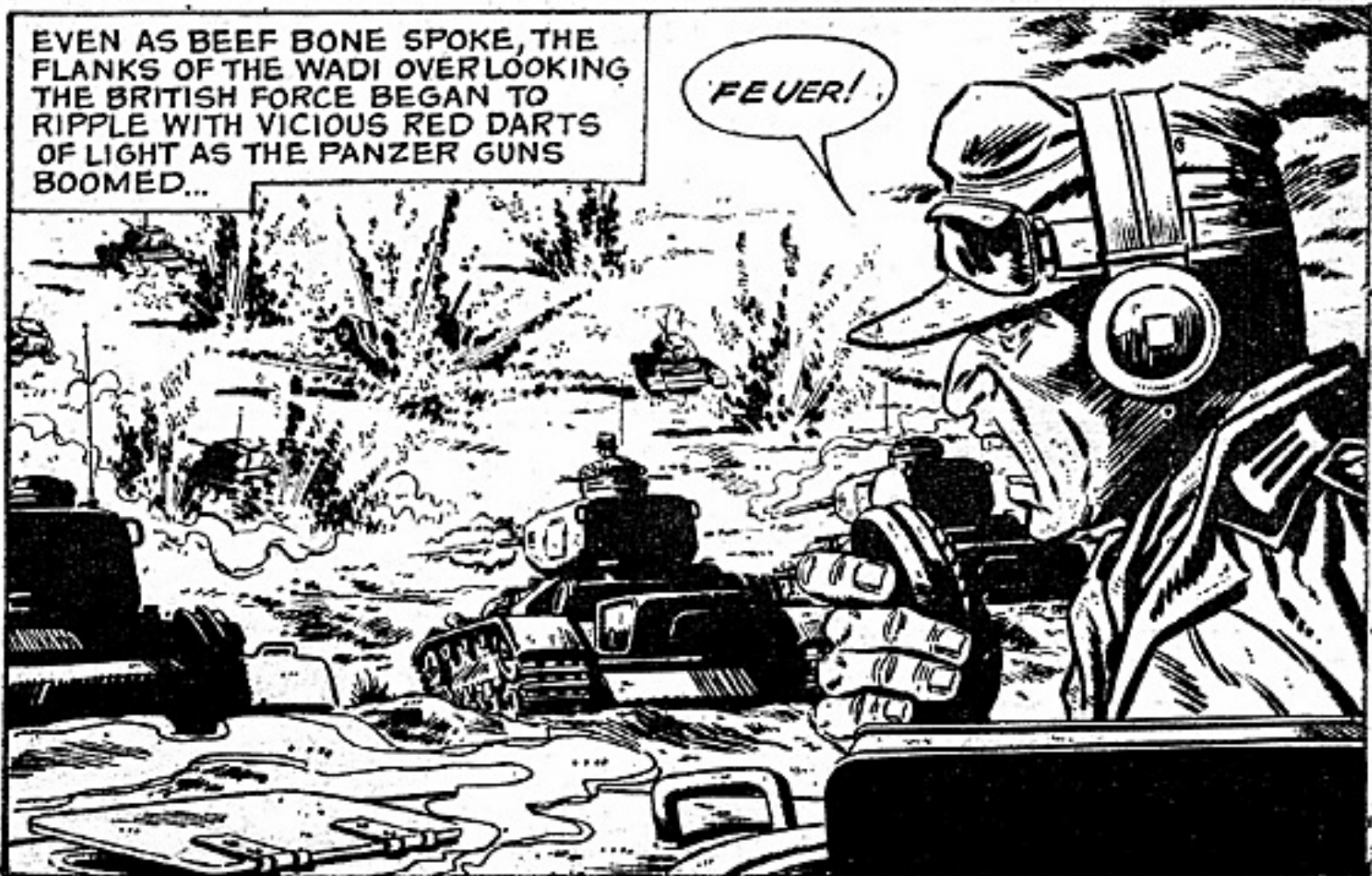
PICK OUT YOUR FIRST TARGET, BEEF! WE'LL SWEEP THE DESERT WITH 'EM THIS TIME! QUARE, THOUGH... THEY'RE NOT WEAVIN' ABOUT.!

IT'S AS IF THEY'RE JUST ASKING TO BE CLOBBERED, DUFF.!



EVEN AS BEEF BONE SPOKE, THE FLANKS OF THE WADI OVERLOOKING THE BRITISH FORCE BEGAN TO RIPPLE WITH VICIOUS RED DARTS OF LIGHT AS THE PANZER GUNS BOOMED...

FEUER!



THE SAVAGE ERUPTIONS OF EXPLODING SHELLS BLOTED OUT THE ADVANCING CRUSADERS IN DENSE CLOUDS OF BLACK SMOKE AND THICK SAND...



IN THE FIRST MOMENT OF THAT BRUTAL BARRAGE, HALF OF THE BRITISH TANKS DIED IN A TERRIBLE WELTER OF FLAME AND STEEL...

THROUGH THE TURMOIL, CON DUFFY SAW THE WAITING MARK IV'S TRUNDLE DOWN FROM THE SURROUNDING HIGH GROUND

WE'VE SAILED RIGHT INTO A TRAP! THERE'S HUNDREDS OF THE DIVILS! BEEF, TRAVERSE RIGHT... RIGHT...!



IT WAS DUFFY'S CREW THAT SCORED THE FIRST HIT. BUT ONE MAULED PANZER WAS A MERE PINPRICK TO THAT SWARMING TIDE OF ARMOUR...

GOOD MAN, BEEF! KEEP FIRING! WINDY... START WEAVING... OR WE'LL BE SCRAP METAL IN NO TIME AT ALL!



THE CRUSADER REGIMENT'S C.O. WAS TRYING TO MARSHAL HIS SCATTERED, SORELY DEPLETED FORCE WHEN HIS OWN TANK WAS HIT...

A HIT! BALE OUT... BALE OUT..!



AS HIS CREW CLAWED CLEAR OF THE HUNGRY FLAMES, THE COLONEL YELLED INTO THE RADIO...

ABLE LEADER TO ALL TANKS! RETREAT TO BASE BEARING! RETREAT!!



THE COLONEL WAS A BRAVE MAN, BUT HE WAS TO PAY THE PRICE FOR REMAINING WITH HIS TANK. THE MICROPHONE WAS STILL IN HIS HAND WHEN A LUMBERING MARK IV FLEW HIM WITH ITS SPANDAU.

ALL SURVIVORS RETREAT... AAAAGH!



SERGEANT CON DUFFY HAD NO TIME TO WITNESS THE END OF HIS COMMANDING OFFICER'S TANK. HE WAS FIGHTING A DESPERATE DUEL WITH TWO PANZERS...



BEEF - TRAVERSE RIGHT! WINDY-WEAVE, MAN!

AT THIS RANGE, THE BITE OF THE CRUSADER'S TWO-POUNDER WAS AS DEADLY AS THE HEAVY-CALIBRE GUNS OF THE GERMAN MARK IV'S.



A HIT! NOW LET'S GET THE OTHER! GUNNER... RANGE ONE HUNDRED YARDS... FIRE!

AS THE TWO POUNDER SLAMMED AGAIN, DUFFY FELT A TUG AT HIS LEG...

ORDERS TO RETREAT, SARGE! WE'RE LICKED!

LICKED, IS IT? ARE WE FINISHED ALREADY...?



RIGHT! ORDERS IS ORDERS! BUT WE'LL POLISH OFF ANOTHER BEFORE WE GO! GET READY, BEEF!

SURE ENOUGH, BEEF'S SECOND SHOT PUNCHED INTO THE PANZER'S ENGINE-HOUSING. WINDY GALE SWUNG THE CRUSADER ROUND...

GOOD SHOOTIN', BEEF ME BOY! NOW LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!



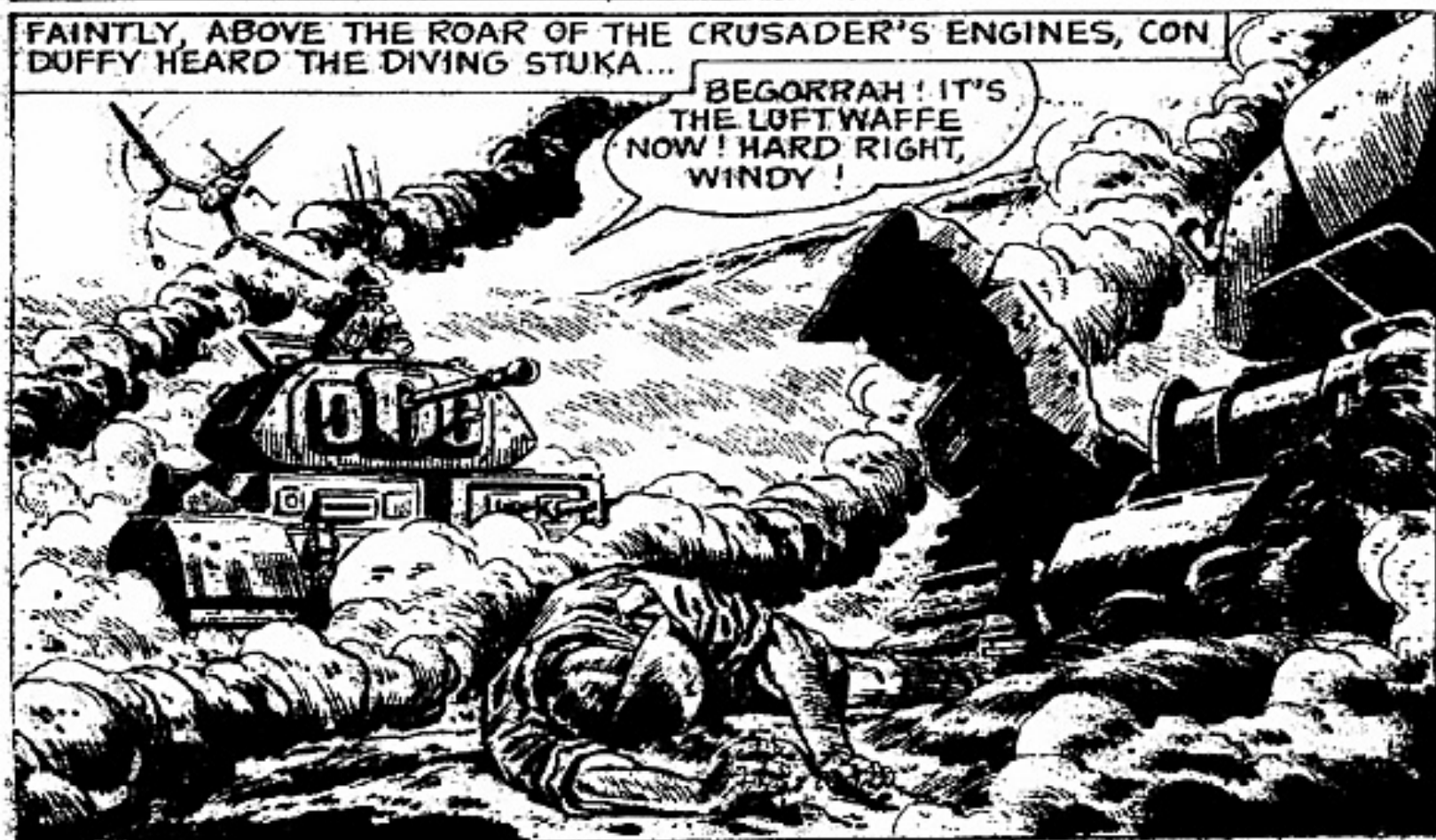
Chapter 3. *The Sand Sea*

BUT, AS THE CRUSADER BEGAN TO RUN FOR SAFETY, ANOTHER MENACE APPEARED. THE FIERCE WHINE OF AN AIRCRAFT ENGINE ROSE ABOVE THE VICIOUS CRESCENDO OF THE GROUND BATTLE...



FAINTLY, ABOVE THE ROAR OF THE CRUSADER'S ENGINES, CON DUFFY HEARD THE DIVING STUKA...

BEGORRAH! IT'S
THE LOFTWAFFE
NOW! HARD RIGHT,
WINDY!



SAVAGELY, WINDY GALE FLUNG HIS TANK INTO A TIGHT TURN. THE STUKA'S BOMB MISSED THE TANK'S STEEL SIDE BY INCHES...



BUT, AS THE CRUSADER PUNCHED THROUGH THE SETTLING DUST OF THE BOMB-BLAST, WINDY GALE'S VOICE GRATED THROUGH THE INTERCOM...

THAT BOMB DID US A BIT OF NO GOOD, SARGE. LISTEN—HER ENGINE DOESN'T SOUND RIGHT!

TRY TO KEEP HER GOING, WINDY! IT SEEMS LOIKE WE GOT THE WHOLE AFRIKA KORPS ON OUR TAIL!



EVEN WITH ITS ENGINE RASPING UNEVENLY, THE NIPPY BRITISH TANK COULD STILL PULL AWAY FROM THE HEAVIER PANZERS...

GOOD BOY, WINDY!
KEEP HER GOING! WE'LL
LIVE TO FIGHT
ANOTHER DAY YET..!

MARVELLOUS, AIN'T
IT? WE'RE HARDLY OUT
OF ONE SCRAP... AND
HE'S THINKING ABOUT
THE NEXT!

A MILE ACROSS THE DESERT,
THE PANZERS GAVE UP THE
PURSUIT. BUT THAT WAS NO
CONSOLATION TO CON DUFFY.
HIS BIG FACE WAS SUBDUED
AS HE SEARCHED THE BARE
HORIZON...

WE'VE LOST THE JERRIES, I
THINK! BUT I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY
OF OUR TANKS MAKIN' A GET-
AWAY! THE WHOLE PERISHIN'
REGIMENT MUST HAVE
BEEN WIPED OUT...!



DUFFY'S CREW WAS SILENT AS THE CRUSADER FORGED ON. SOON THEY REACHED THE POSITION WHERE THE REGIMENT HAD LEAGURED THE NIGHT BEFORE. THE SITE WAS A MANGLED ACRE OF TORN METAL AND SMOKING CRATERS.

LOOKS LIKE THE STUKAS GOT EVERY MAN-JACK!

LOOK, DUFF! THERE'S THE SUPPLY-TRUCK! NO SENSE IN LEAVING ALL THAT STUFF TO THE JERRIES!

CON DUFFY HESITATED. HIS BLUE EYES RAKED THE DESERT BEHIND THEM. HE COULD SEE NOTHING...

WELL, I RECKON THE PANZERS HAVE CALLED IT A DAY! STOP, WINDY! WE'LL TAKE SOME OF THOSE SUPPLIES ON BOARD!

THEY CLIMBED OUT INTO THAT GRISLY SCENE OF DESTRUCTION, AND BEGAN TO UNLOAD THE CRATES FROM THE RATION TRUCK. DUFFY WAS LASHING A CRATE OF BEER TO THE REAR OF THE CRUSADER WHEN SID BEAL CAME UP...

THERE'S ABOUT A DOZEN JERRICANS OF WATER, DUFF! RECKON WE SHOULD TAKE THEM?

PUT A COUPLE ON, SID! THOUGH WITH ALL THIS LOVELY STUFF ABOUT I'M NOT LIKELY TO BE DRINKIN' WATER!

INTENT ON THEIR TASK, THE TANKMEN DID NOT SEE THE DISTANT ARMoured SCOUT CAR WITH THE BLACK CROSS ON ITS YELLOW SURFACE...

SO! ONE BRITISH TANK ESCAPED OUR TRAP! WE WILL SOON ALTER THAT! FULL SPEED, DRIVER!



THE SCOUT CAR BORED IN. IT TOOK THE HARD-WORKING TANKMEN BY SURPRISE WITH A SUDDEN STREAM OF SPANDAU BULLETS...

AAGH!

SID!

IT'S A JERRY!



DUFFY PICKED UP THE WOUNDED SID BEAL, AND RAN TOWARDS THE CRUSADER THROUGH THE LEAD-LASHED SAND...

THE ROTTEN BACK-SHOOTERS! QUICK, LADS! GET ABOARD!

GUNNER! ARMOUR PIERCING... FIRE!



AS DUFFY'S CREW SCRAMBLED INTO THEIR SEATS, THE FIRST GERMAN SHELL PUNCTURED THE CRUSADER'S THIN HULL. BEEF BONE RECOILED AS THE TANK'S RADIO DISINTEGRATED...



BEEF RECOVERED QUICKLY, AND SQUIRMED IN BEHIND THE TWO-POUNDER. HE WAS SWINGING THE BARREL OF THE GUN VICIOUSLY WHEN THE GERMAN SCOUT-CAR TURNED AND BEGAN TO RACE AWAY FROM THEM...

HOLD IT, BEEF! THE HARM'S DONE! THEY'RE BOUND TO HAVE CALLED UP THEIR MATES!

I GUESS WE'D BETTER SHOVE OFF, SARGE!

BEEF BONE DRESSED SID BEAL'S WOUND AS THEY MOVED ON. IT WAS TWO MILES LATER THAT THE CRUSADER'S ENGINE STARTED TO LABOUR...

HERE THEY COME... A WHOLE PACK OF JERRY'S FERRETS! CAN'T YE GO ANY FASTER, WINDY?

THE ENGINE'S DODGY, SARGE! IT'S PACKING UP... LOSING SPEED ALL THE TIME!



AS THE FIRST SHELLS FROM THE PURSUING ARMoured CARS BEGAN TO EXPLODE BEHIND THEM, DUFFY RAKED THE SURROUNDING DESERT THROUGH HIS FIELD GLASSES...

I'M NOT A MAN TO SHIRK A FIGHT
BUT THESE ODDS ARE TOO BIG.
WE'VE GOT TO SHAKE 'EM OFF!



THEN AHEAD OF HIM, DUFFY SAW THE HIGH, ROLLING SAND DUNES. HIS VOICE RANG LOUDLY IN THE STARTLED EARS OF HIS CREW.

MAKE FOR THE DUNES! THOSE
ARMoured CARS ARE ALMOST
AS HEAVY AS WE ARE! THEY
WON'T RISK GETTIN'
BOGGED DOWN IN
THAT LOT!

WHAT ABOUT
US, SARGE?
WON'T WE
GET BOGGED
DOWN?



BUT IT WAS A RISK THEY HAD TO TAKE. THE DUNES WERE THEIR ONLY CHANCE OF ESCAPE. MOVING CAREFULLY IN LOW GEAR, THE CRUSADER GROWLED INTO THE BILLOWING MAZE OF FINE SAND...

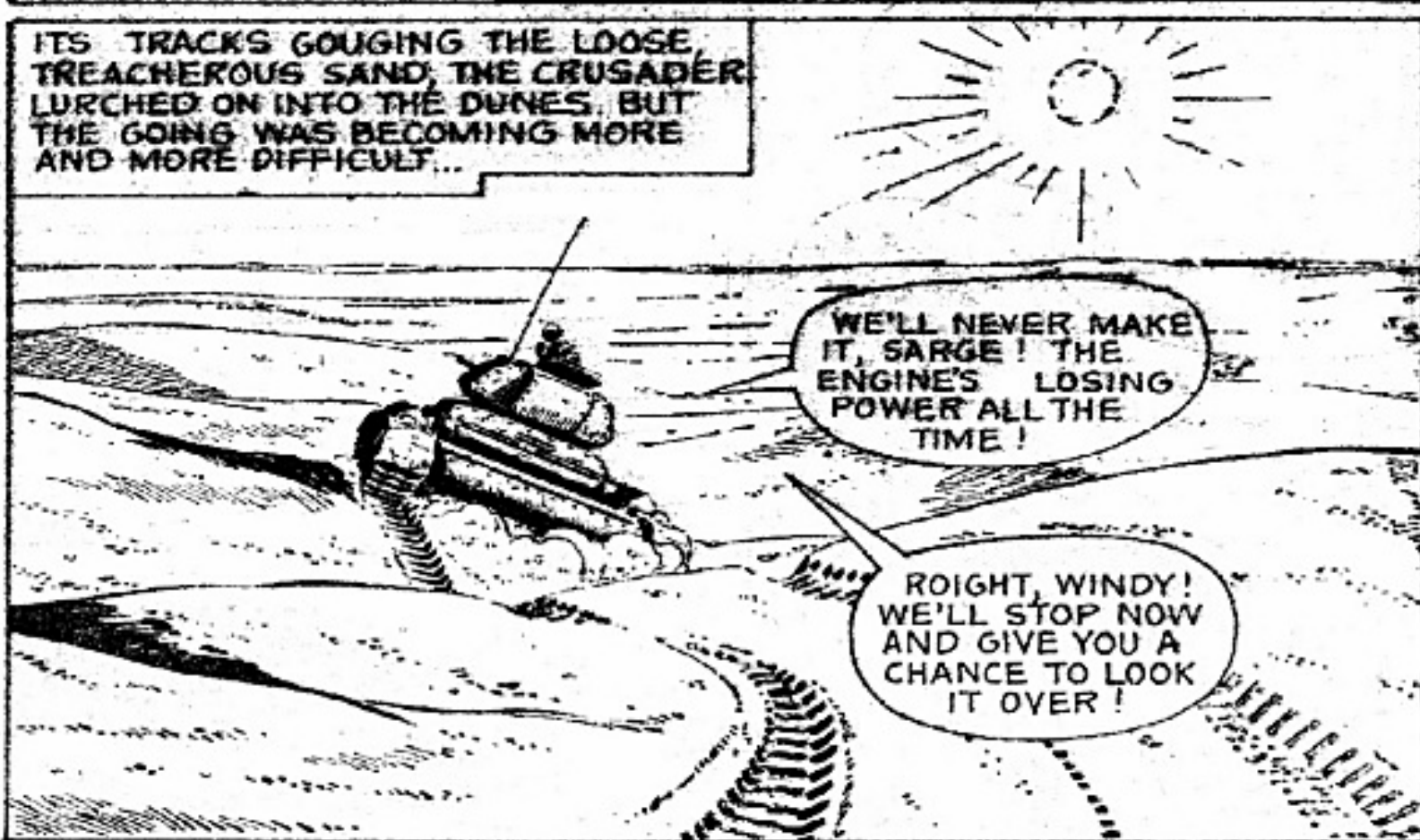
DRIVER... STOP! THOSE STUPID ENGLANDERS COULD HAVE SURRENDERED! BUT THEY WILL FIND A WORSE FATE IN THE DUNES!



ITS TRACKS GOUGING THE LOOSE TREACHEROUS SAND, THE CRUSADER LURCHED ON INTO THE DUNES, BUT THE GOING WAS BECOMING MORE AND MORE DIFFICULT...

WE'LL NEVER MAKE IT, SARGE! THE ENGINE'S LOSING POWER ALL THE TIME!

ROIGHT, WINDY! WE'LL STOP NOW AND GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO LOOK IT OVER!



LUCKILY, SID BEAL WAS MUCH BETTER. BUT WINDY GALE'S FACE WAS GRIM AS HE TURNED AWAY FROM THE INSPECTION HATCH OF THE CRUSADER'S ENGINE...

IT'S NO USE, SARGE! THE WHOLE ENGINE'S RIDDLED! IT'S A WASTE OF TIME TRYING TO PATCH IT UP!

RIGHT, THEN. WE'LL WALK!

YEAH! BUT WHERE, DUFF. I THOUGHT WE WERE LOST!



SURE, I'VE A ROUGH IDEA WHERE WE ARE — SOMEWHERE IN THE GREAT SAND SEA! IF WE HEAD NORTH, WE SHOULD RUN INTO OUR OWN BLOKES...

YOU'RE THE BOSS, DUFF! BUT IT SOUNDS PRETTY VAGUE TO ME!



CON DUFFY HAD A KNACK FOR MAKING MEN ATTEMPT THE IMPOSSIBLE. SILENTLY, THEY STARTED WALKING, STUMBLING IN THE LOOSE SAND, BOWED BENEATH THE BRAZEN HEAT OF THE SUN...



THEY KEPT GOING UNTIL NIGHTFALL. DARKNESS BROUGHT RELIEF FROM THE HEAT. BUT A SANDSTORM BLEW UP TO BRING A FRESH TWIST TO THEIR MISERY...



ALL NIGHT THE SANDSTORM RAGED ON, AND WELL INTO THE NEXT DAY. AT LAST IT STOPPED, AND DUFFY CLIMBED ALONE TO THE SLITHERING CREST OF A DUNE...

OF ALL THE LUCK! THAT WIND CAME FROM EAST TO WEST! THAT MEANS THESE CONFOUNDED DUNES WILL HAVE EXTENDED FOR MILES! WE'RE LOST NOW! WELL AND TRULY LOST!



FOR HOURS THEY TRUDGED ON. BUT THE HEAT AND THE TREACHEROUS GOING WAS TAKING ITS TOLL. FIRST, THE WOUNDED SID BEAL COLLAPSED. THEN WINDY GALE GROANED AS HE STUMBED TO THE GROUND...



BUT, TWO HOURS LATER, THE TERRIBLE HEAT SAPPED THE LAST OUNCE OF ENERGY FROM BEEF BONE'S WILTING FRAME...



EVEN CON DUFFY'S FIGHTING SPIRIT WAS A LITTLE WAN NOW, AS HE LOWERED SID AND WINDY TO JOIN THE UNCONSCIOUS BEEF BONE ON THE HOT SAND. THEN HE NOTICED SOMETHING...

SCRUB! BEGORRAH, MAYBE THAT MEANS WE'RE COMING TO THE END OF THE DUNES!



DUFFY'S MIND WORKED FAST. MOMENTS LATER, HE WAS USING THE LAST OF HIS SUN-SAPPED STRENGTH TO CUT THE TOUGH BOUGHS OF CAMEL-THORN THAT GREW FROM THE SMALL ROCKY PLATEAU...

THAT... SHOULD DO... IT! LET'S HOPE I'M RIGHT ABOUT THIS SCRUB!

WITH THE TOUGH LENGTHS OF CAMEL-THORN, DUFFY QUICKLY FASHIONED A CRUDE BUT SERVICEABLE LITTER. HIS COMPANIONS GROANED AS HE DRAGGED THEM ON TO IT, BUT THEY DID NOT MOVE AS DUFFY STAGGERED ON...



Duffy's Kingdom

THE IRISHMAN TOTTERED ON, BLINDLY NOW, TORTURED BY THE DEAD WEIGHT OF THE LITTER, AND THE PITILESS HAMMER-BLOWS OF HEAT. HE DID NOT SEE THE NEW DANGER THAT THREATENED HIM...



VAGUELY, DUFFY HEARD THE ECHOING CRACK OF THE RIFLE. FOR ONE VICIOUS SECOND HE FELT THE HOT WHIPLASH OF THE BULLET THAT CREASED HIS SKULL. THEN HE DROPPED, UNCONSCIOUS...

UHH...!



Chapter 4. *The Valley*

DUFFY'S MOUTH WAS DRY WHEN HE RECOVERED CONSCIOUSNESS. HIS EYES BLINKED OPEN, EXPECTING THE MOLTEN GLARE OF THE SUN. INSTEAD HE SAW THE SOILED, STRIPED AWNING OF A TENT...



HIS LOUD, QUESTIONING GRUNT AROUSED TWO OTHER MEN. WINDY GALE AND BEEF BONE LOOKED ONCE AT THEIR SERGEANT, THEN GAZED AROUND CURIOUSLY...

DUFFY, WHAT...
HAPPENED ? WE
BIN TAKEN
PRISONER, OR
SOMETHING ?



A STOOPING FIGURE SUDDENLY BLOTTED OUT THE SUN-FILLED DOORWAY, GAVE A DEEP BOW THEN STRAIGHTENED UP. THE VOICE WAS RICH AND FRIENDLY...



A SHADOW CROSSED THE TALL ARAB'S FACE. HE INTRODUCED HIMSELF AS ABDUL KASSIM, THE CHIEFTAIN OF A NAMELESS DESERT TRIBE...

IT WAS ONE OF MY WARRIORS, EFFENDI. HE THOUGHT YOU WERE THE GERMAN, THE ONE WE CALL THE SCORPION, RETURNING TO HARM OUR VILLAGE!

CON DUFFY SWAYED TO HIS FEET. HIS THROBBING BRAIN WAS TEEMING WITH QUESTIONS...

JERRIES! WHAT THE HECK ARE THEY DOING THIS FAR SOUTH? AND WHAT ABOUT SID? THE LITTLE LAD... YOU MUST HAVE FOUND HIM WITH US!

THE ONE WHO WAS INJURED? HE IS VERY SICK! COME, I WILL TAKE YOU TO HIM!



THE TANKMEN HAD TIME TO SEE THAT THEY WERE IN A SMALL VALLEY, ENCLOSED BY HIGH SHELVES OF SANDSTONE, BEFORE THEY ENTERED THE CRUDE HUT WHERE SID BEAL LAY. THE LITTLE COCKNEY WAS STILL ALIVE, BUT HIS BREATHING WAS LABOURED..



LUMME! SID LOOKS BAD! WILL HE BE ALL RIGHT?

WE ARE WISE IN THE MAKING OF MEDICINES. I THINK WE HAVE SAVED YOUR FRIEND FROM DEATH! BUT IT WILL BE MANY DAYS BEFORE HE IS STRONG ENOUGH TO WALK!

DUFFY NODDED. HE HAD A FEELING SID WAS IN GOOD HANDS.

WELL, THAT'S IT THEN, LADS! JERRIES OR NOT WE'LL NOT LEAVE

SID BEHIND! RIGHT?

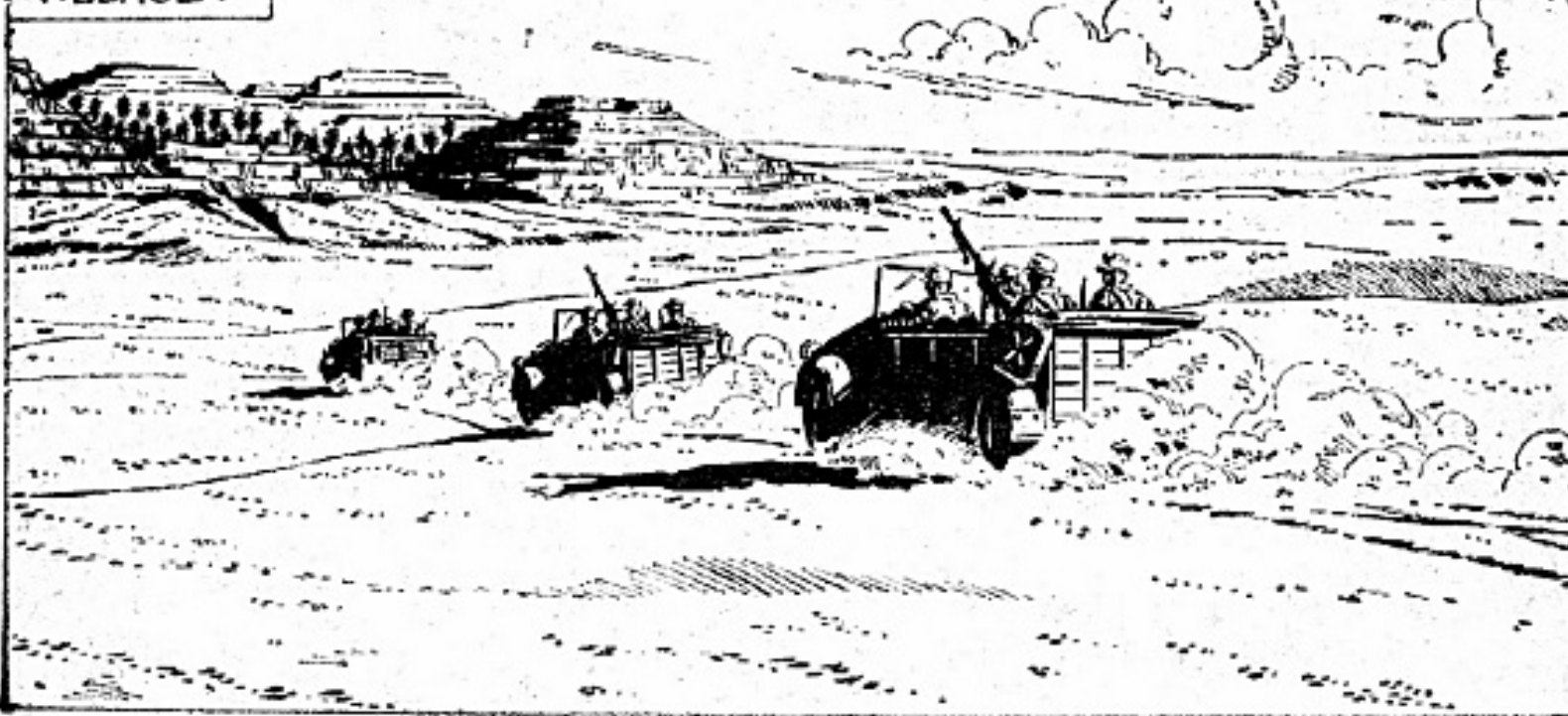
RIGHT, DUFF! IF SID STAYS HERE... THEN SO DO WE!



KASSIM INVITED THEM TO TAKE FOOD AND DRINK. BUT AS THE FOUR MEN STEPPED AGAIN INTO THE HARSH SUNLIGHT...



THE THREE, BLACK-CROSSED VEHICLES WERE MOVING BRISKLY ACROSS THE SAND. THEY WERE DESERT-TRUCKS OF THE AFRIKA KORPS, HEADING TOWARDS THE HIGH PASS THAT LED TO ABDUL KASSIM'S VILLAGE.



THE GERMAN COLUMN HALTED AT THE EDGE OF THE ARAB VILLAGE. MAJOR HUGO KRANZ, COMMANDING AN S.S. DETACHMENT OF THE AFRIKA KORPS, STRODE FORWARD ARROGANTLY...

COME HERE, OLD MAN! WE HAVE FOUND A BRITISH TANK... WE THINK YOU ARE HIDING THE ENGLANDERS IN THIS VILLAGE!

NO! WE HAVE NOT SEEN THE MEN YOU SEEK!

THE PROUD, DIGNIFIED BEARING OF THE ARAB INFURIATED THE NAZI MAJOR...

I DO NOT BELIEVE YOU, ARAB SCUM! BUT THERE ARE WAYS OF FINDING THE TRUTH! SEIZE HIM!



THE HIDEOUT WHICH THE VILLAGERS HAD PROVIDED FOR DUFFY AND HIS CREW WAS A CONCEALED CAVE. THEY WERE CROUCHING THERE WHEN THEY HEARD A MUFFLED SPLUTTER OF GUNFIRE...

SHOOTING! MAYBE THE JERRIES HAVE STARTED ON THE ARABS!

LET'S FIND OUT!
NO POOR DESERT
MICK'S GETTING
KILLED BECAUSE
OF US...!

THE LAST OF THE GERMAN JEEPS WAS GROWLING OUT THROUGH THE PASS WHEN THE TANKMEN REACHED THE VILLAGE. THEY SAW THE SILENT TRIBESMEN GROUPED AROUND THE STILL, TWISTED FIGURE IN THE SAND...

THE JERRIES HAVE HOPPED IT!

BUT THEY'VE
LEFT THEIR
TRADE-MARK!
COME ON!



CON DUFFY'S FACE WAS LIKE STONE AS HE STARED DOWN AT THE LIFELESS BODY OF ABDUL KASSIM. THE ARAB HAD PAID THE PRICE OF HIS COURAGE...

BUT WHY DID THEY DO IT?

KASSIM WOULD NOT TELL THE GERMANS YOU WERE HERE, EFFENDI. THE CRUEL ONE MURDERED HIM.

THE TANKMEN FELT THE COLD CLUTCH OF HORROR.

KASSIM WAS A GOOD MAN! HE WAS GOING TO TEACH US HOW TO DEFEND OURSELVES AGAINST THE GERMANS...

I'LL TEACH YOU, ME FRIEND! I'LL MAKE SURE KASSIM IS THE LAST TO DIE WITHOUT A CHANCE TO FIGHT BACK...

CON DUFFY DID NOT DELIBERATELY SET HIMSELF UP AS THE ARABS' LEADER. BUT THE VILLAGERS WANTED TO FIGHT... AND THE BIG IRISHMAN WAS READY TO TEACH THEM.

THE BEST PLACE TO AIM FOR IS THE TYRES! THAT WILL STOP THEM DEAD! WITH TANKS IT'S DIFFERENT - BUT WE'LL GO ON TO THAT NEXT..!

Duffy's Kingdom

SOMEHOW, ONE OF THE TRIBESMEN MANAGED TO PRODUCE AN ANCIENT LEWIS GUN...

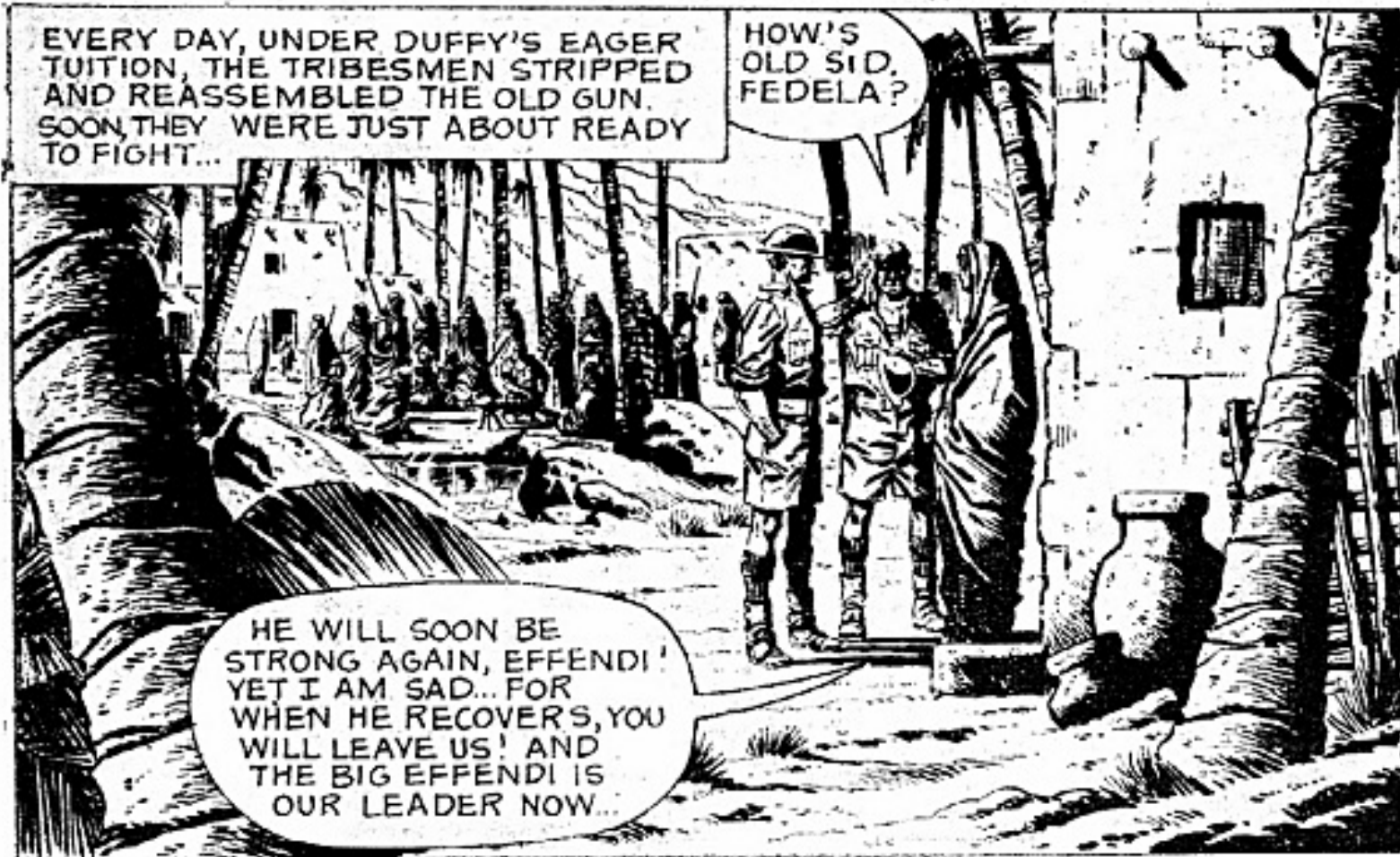
IN KASSIM'S DWELLING PLACE WE FOUND THIS, EFFENDI...

IT'S A REAL MUSEUM-PIECE... BUT THE LEWIS IS A GREAT LITTLE GUN, PROVIDED YOU KNOW ENOUGH ABOUT IT TO KEEP IT FIRING!



EVERY DAY, UNDER DUFFY'S EAGER TUITION, THE TRIBESMEN STRIPPED AND REASSEMBLED THE OLD GUN. SOON, THEY WERE JUST ABOUT READY TO FIGHT...

HOW'S OLD SID, FEDELA?



HE WILL SOON BE STRONG AGAIN, EFFENDI! YET I AM SAD... FOR WHEN HE RECOVER'S, YOU WILL LEAVE US! AND THE BIG EFFENDI IS OUR LEADER NOW...

THE MARKSMANSHIP OF DUFFY'S PUPILS WAS NOT AS ACCURATE AS IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN. BUT ONCE THEY HAD LEARNED THE FUNDAMENTAL TACTICS OF WAR THEIR RUGGED TEACHER WAS SATISFIED.

GOOD JOB KASSIM BOUGHT PLENTY OF SPARE PANS FOR THAT LEWIS!

HE WAS A GOOD MAN, WAS KASSIM! A COUPLE OF THE VILLAGERS TRIED TO PERSUADE ME TO STAY ON AS THEIR LEADER! HOW'S THAT FOR A JOKE?



BUT DUFFY'S COMRADES DID NOT LAUGH. WINDY GALE WAS SERIOUS...

IT'S NOT SUCH A JOKE, DUFF! YOU LIKE THESE PEOPLE AND THEY RESPECT AND ADMIRE YOU!

WINDY'S RIGHT, SARGE! BUT COULD YOU SETTLE DOWN HERE AND FORGET ABOUT THE WAR? IT WON'T END FOR A FAIR TIME YET.



CON DUFFY SIGHED.
HIS VOICE WAS
LOW AND WISTFUL...

I DON'T KNOW, BEEF! I'M
OLDER THAN YOU TWO! I'VE DONE
A LOT OF FIGHTING! IN THIS
VALLEY, I'VE FOUND A BIT OF
PEACE - MAYBE FOR THE
FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE!

SUDDENLY, THE BIG SERGEANT TURNED ON HIS HEELS AND STALKED OFF
TOWARDS THE OPEN DESERT. HE NEEDED THE SOLITUDE...

IT'S NOT AS CRAZY AS IT
SOUNDS, DUFF! YOU'VE
DONE MORE THAN YOUR
SHARE OF FIGHTING!

YOU DON'T
HAVE TO COME BACK
WITH US! THINK IT
OVER, MATE!



HIS BROW CREASED, SERGEANT CON DUFFY CLIMBED TO THE HIGH RIDGE ABOVE THE LITTLE VALLEY. HE FELT THE DRY DESERT WIND UPON HIS FACE. HE SIGHED AGAIN WITH REGRET...

BEDAD, I'D LIKE TO STAY, ALL RIGHT! BUT I CAN'T FORGET THE WAR... AND EVERY TIME I THOUGHT OF IT I'D KNOW I WAS A QUITTER! IT'S JUST A DREAM... NOT FOR OLD DUFFY...



A VOICE, SHRILL WITH ALARM, SUDDENLY JERKED HIM FROM HIS SOMBRE THOUGHTS...

GERMANS COME, BIG EFFENDI! MANY MEN ... MANY WAGONS!



RIGHT... GET SOME CAMELS AND CALL ME TWO FRIENDS! WE'LL TAKE A CLOSER LOOK!

WITH THE WILLING HELP OF THE VILLAGERS, THE TANKMEN HAD MASTERED THE KNACK OF RIDING CAMELS. MOMENTS LATER, THE LEGGY BEASTS WERE CARRYING THEM SWIFTLY OVER THE DUNES...

THERE, BIG EFFENDI! NEVER HAVE I SEEN SO MANY GERMANS!

THAT'S NO ORDINARY PATROL! IT LOOKS MORE LIKE A STRIKE COLUMN!



I RECKON THAT'S A FIGHTING FORCE ON IT'S WAY TO TAKE OUR BOYS IN THE REAR... LIKE OUR OWN LONG RANGE DESERT GROUP!

YE MAY BE RIGHT, BEEF LAD! COME ON... WE'VE SEEN ENOUGH!



THEY WERE TURNING BACK TO THE CAMELS WHEN THE TRIBESMAN WHO HAD ACCOMPANIED THEM CLUTCHED AT DUFFY'S ARM. THE ARAB WAS POINTING AT THE LEAN GERMAN OFFICER WHO SAT IN THE LEADING CAR.

EFFENDI! THAT GERMAN IS THE CRUEL ONE! HE IS THE MAN WHO MURDERED KASSIM!



FOR THE FIRST TIME IN WEEKS, CON DUFFY'S BLUE EYES BLAZED WITH FURY...

SO... HE MUST BE THE ONE WHO'S LEADIN' THEM TO THE VALLEY! THIS DAY HE'LL PAY FOR ABDUL KASSIM'S LIFE! DUFFY PROMISES YOU THAT...!



Chapter 5. *The Reckoning*

WITH THEIR THICK TYRES
CHURNING THE FINE SAND,
THE GERMAN TRUCKS
MADE TOWARDS THE
MOUTH OF THE HIGH PASS
THAT LED TO THE VILLAGE.

THE VALLEY IS
BEYOND THAT PASS
HERR OBERST! WE
WILL FIND WATER
THERE...

YOU HAVE DONE WELL
TO DISCOVER SUCH A PLACE,
MAJOR KRANZ! THIS OASIS
COULD PLAY A VITAL PART
IN FUTURE SORTIES
AGAINST THE BRITISH!

THE GERMANS RECEIVED THE SHOCK OF THEIR LIVES WHEN A
HAIL OF HOT LEAD SWEEPED THE ENTIRE COLUMN.

AAAAGH!

HIMMEL
TAKE
COVER!



THE GERMAN CARS QUICKLY SOUGHT THE SHELTER OF THE SURROUNDING DUNES. THREE OF THEM WERE WRECKED BY THE BURST OF FIRE. MAJOR KRANZ WAS SHAKING AS HE DASHED FOR COVER. HIS COLONEL SNARLED AT HIM...

YOU DOLT! YOU SAID THE ARABS WOULD BE SCARED OF US! NOW WHAT DO WE DO?

I... I DO NOT UNDERSTAND, HERR OBERST! I AM CERTAIN THERE ARE NO TROOPS HERE! THE ARABS CANNOT BE STRONG — WE MUST ATTACK!

NUMERICALLY, THE FIGHTING TRIBESMEN WERE AT A DISADVANTAGE. BUT THEY HAD CON DUFFY TO LEAD THEM... AND THAT MADE THEM STRONG...

HERE THEY COME AGAIN! YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO, LADS! BUT DON'T FORGET... LET THAT FIRST JEEP COME THROUGH!

IF ONLY WE HAD A FEW GRENADES! BUT MAYBE YOUR SUBSTITUTE WILL WORK, SARGE!

THE GERMANS WERE RACING THROUGH THE PASS WHEN THEY HEARD THE SOUND OF THUNDER ABOVE THEM. THEY STARED WIDE-EYED AS AN AVALANCHE OF HEAVY PALM-TREE LOGS ROLLED TOWARDS THEM AT CRUSHING SPEED...



MAJOR KRANZ AND THE COLONEL LEPT CLEAR BEFORE THEIR JEEP WAS ENGULFED. BUT THEIR COMRADES WERE NOT AS LUCKY.



THE SOLDIERS IN THE LEADING GERMAN JEEP THOUGHT THAT THEY HAD ESCAPED-UNTIL A CLATTERING LEWIS GUN FLAYED THEM WITH LEAD...

NICE SHOOTING, DUFFY!
YOU GOT 'EM ALL, BOY!

WE NEED THEIR SCHMEISSERS, BEEF! THAT'S WHY I LET 'EM COME THROUGH! LET'S HOPE THAT MURDERER IS WITH 'EM!

BUT, WHEN THE EAGER TRIBESMEN HAD GATHERED UP THE WEAPONS OF DUFFY'S VICTIMS, THE IRISHMAN SAW THAT THE SCORE FOR ABDUL KASSIM'S MURDER HAD STILL TO BE SETTLED...

THE CRUEL ONE IS NOT HERE, EFFENDI!

THE GERMAN LIVES! THERE IS THE MURDERER OF KASSIM!

THE GERMAN COLUMN WAS MAULED AND IMMOBILISED. CON DUFFY LED THE WORK OF MOPPING UP...

LET'S FINISH THE JOB ME LADS! GIVE IT TO 'EM-ALL YOU'VE GOT..!



MAJOR KRANZ AND HIS COLONEL WERE COVERING IN COVER WHEN A BURST FROM DUFFY'S GUN RIPPED SPLINTERS FROM THE ROCK ABOVE THEIR HEADS...

THAT BRITISHER IS A MADMAN! HE WILL KILL US!



DUFFY WAS CHANGING THE AMMUNITION PAN OF THE LEWIS GUN WHEN THE GERMAN OFFICERS RACED TOWARDS A CAR THAT STOOD MOTIONLESS.

THAT'S THE FELLER WHO KILLED KASSIM! GET HIM!



BUT THE ARABS WERE NOT AS ACCURATE AS DUFFY MIGHT HAVE BEEN. THEIR BULLETS WERE THRASHING WILDLY AROUND THE CAR AS KRANZ BACKED IT FRANTICALLY FROM THE PASS...

THAT'S THE FELLER WHO KILLED KASSIM! GET HIM!



THE BIG SERGEANT HAD TAKEN TWO ANGRY STEPS DOWN THE SLOPING FACE OF THE PASS BEFORE WINDY GALE AND BEEF BONE STOPPED HIM...

IT'S NOT WORTH IT, DUFF! LET HIM GO! THAT BLOKE WILL GET WHAT'S COMING TO HIM!

LEAVE GO OF ME! SURE, YE DON'T UNDERSTAND..!



FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HIS LIFE, THERE WAS FEAR IN THE BLUE EYES OF SERGEANT CON DUFFY. BUT THE FEAR WAS NOT FOR HIMSELF...

DON'T YOU SEE? THAT MURDERIN' WHELP IS THE ONLY JERRY THAT KNOWS THE WAY TO THIS VALLEY! IF HE GETS BACK, HE'LL TELL HIS MATES WHERE IT IS! THEY'LL USE IT AS A BASE.



IT WAS BEEF BONE WHO FIRST GRASPED THE MEANING BEHIND THE IRISHMAN'S WORDS.

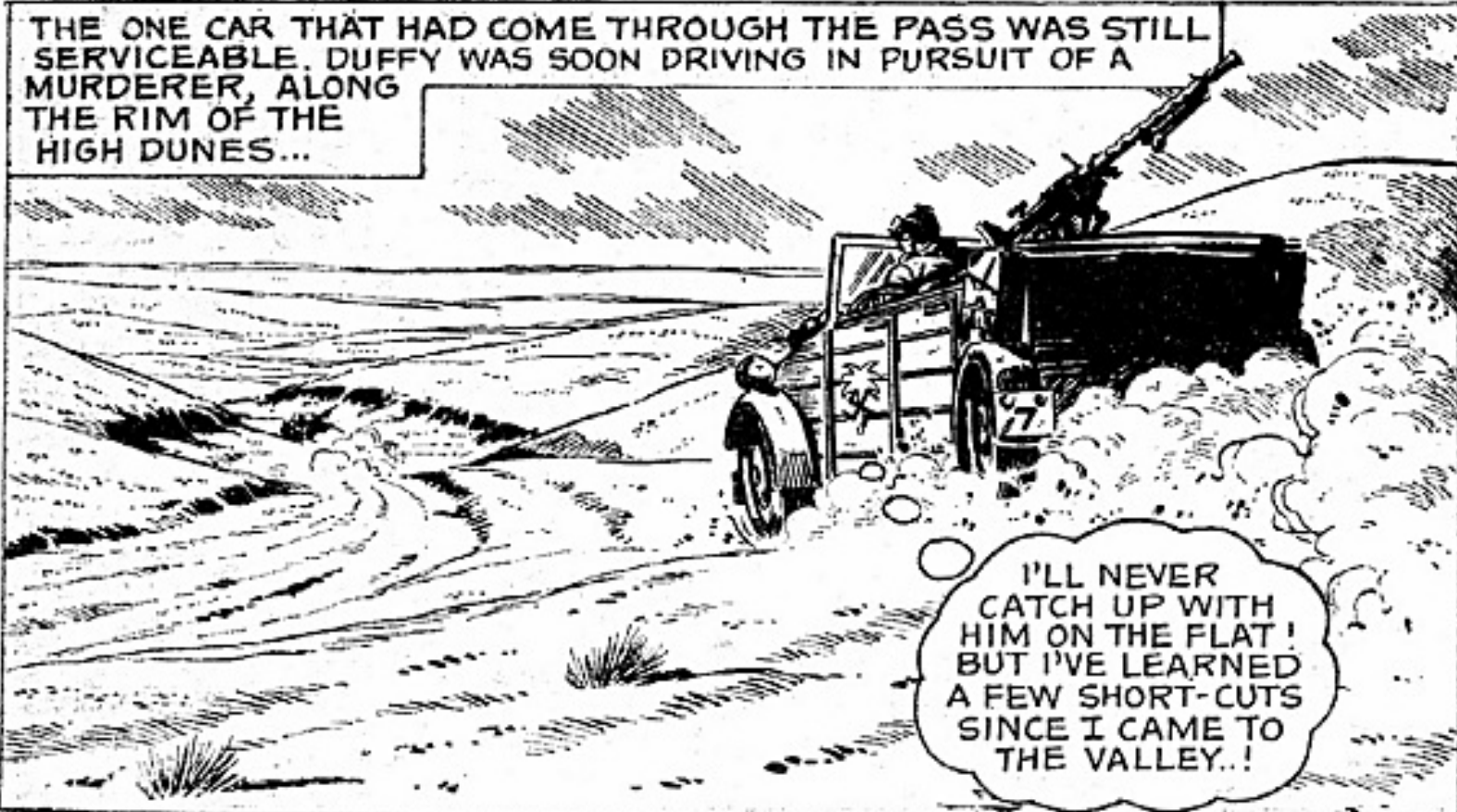
YOU MEAN, WE'LL HAVE TO REPORT THE GERMANS ARE USING THIS PLACE! THEN THEY'LL BOMB IT TO MAKE SURE JERRY DOESN'T USE IT AGAIN!

THE VALLEY WILL BE WIPED OUT!

YOU'VE GOT IT! NOW STAY HERE... I'LL STOP THE BOYOS IN THAT JEEP!



THE ONE CAR THAT HAD COME THROUGH THE PASS WAS STILL SERVICEABLE. DUFFY WAS SOON DRIVING IN PURSUIT OF A MURDERER, ALONG THE RIM OF THE HIGH DUNES...

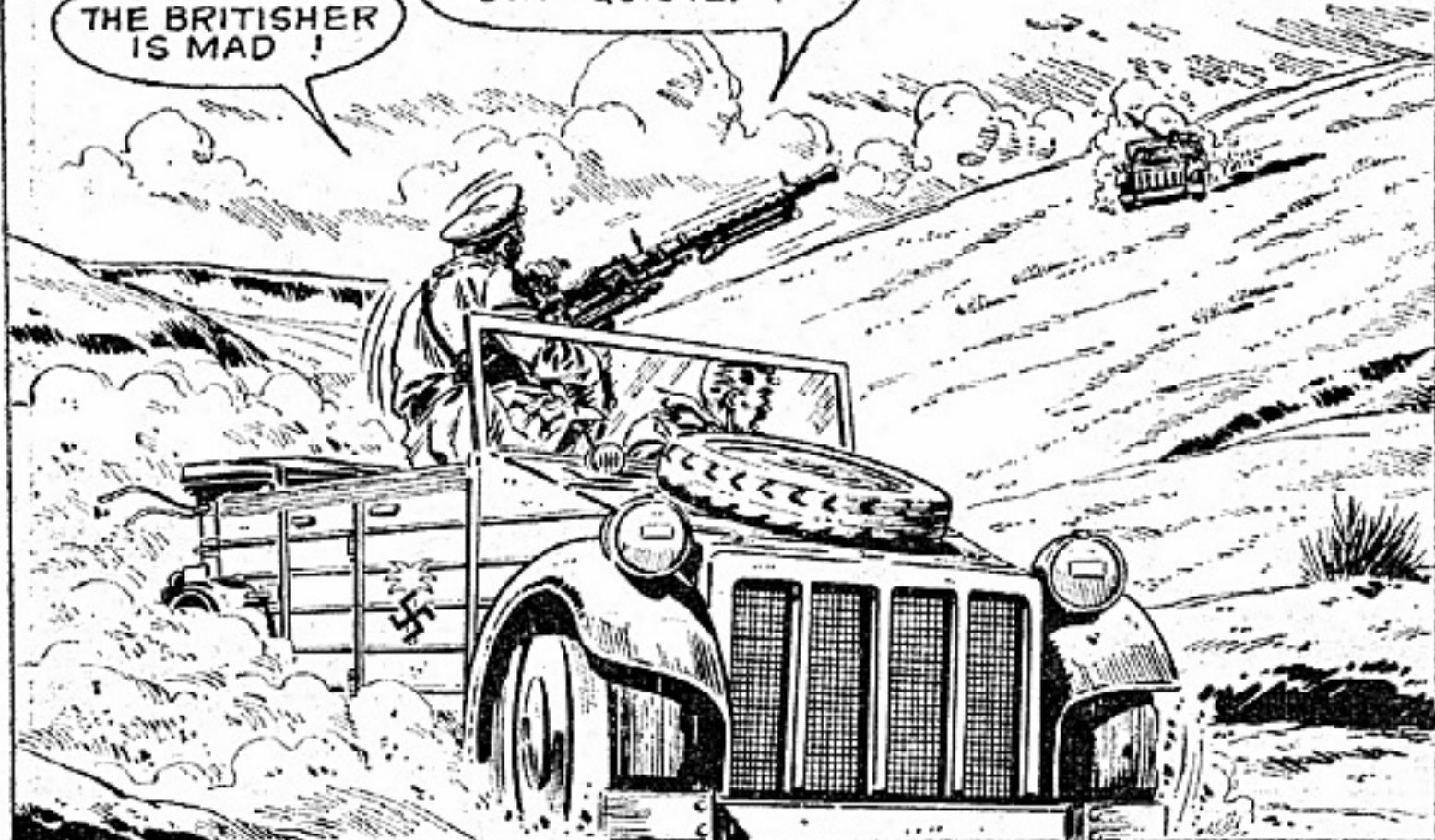


I'LL NEVER CATCH UP WITH HIM ON THE FLAT! BUT I'VE LEARNED A FEW SHORT-CUTS SINCE I CAME TO THE VALLEY..!

IT WAS KRANZ WHO FIRST SAW DUFFY'S CAR TOP THE STEEP DUNE AND HURTLE DOWN...

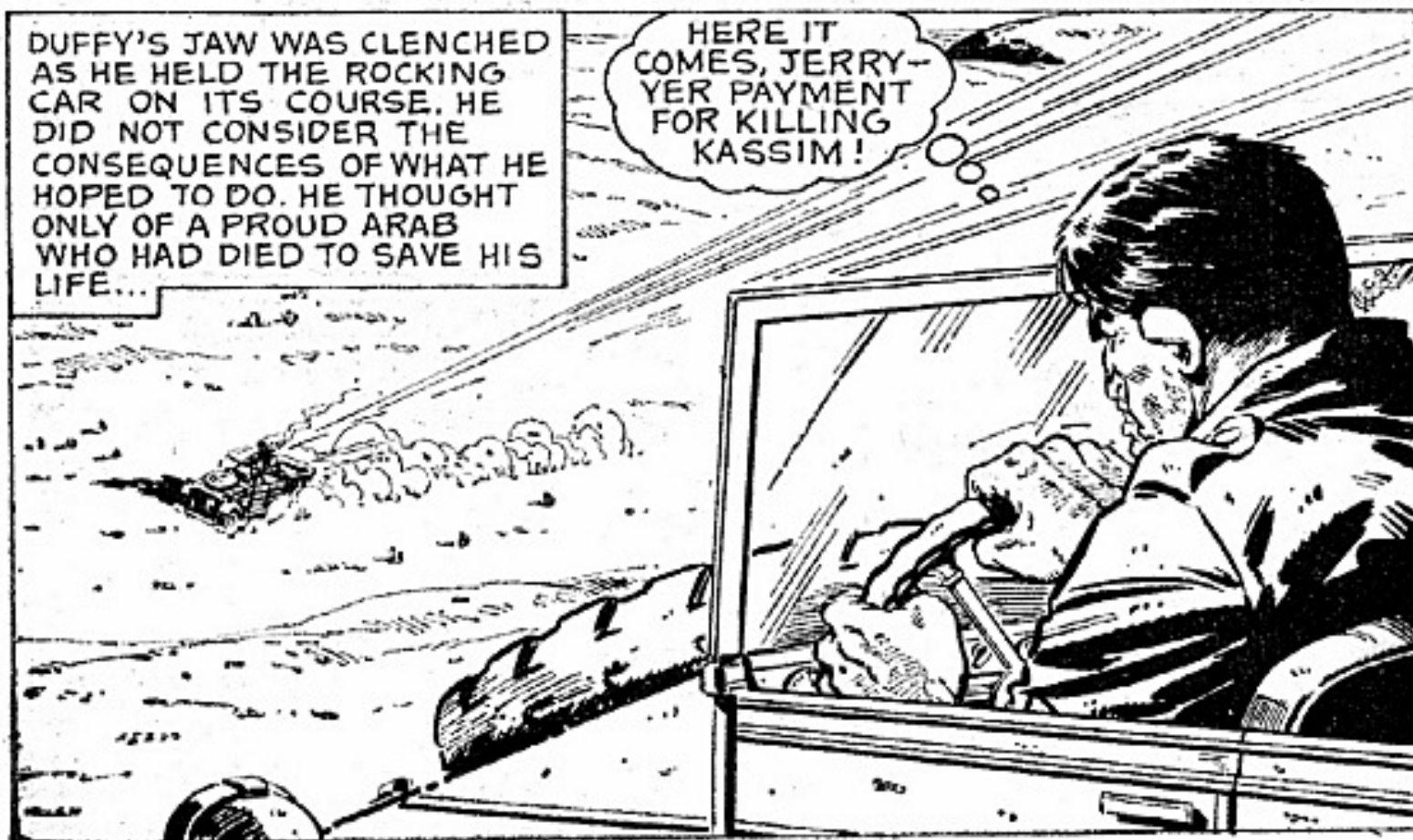
THE BRITISHER IS MAD!

HERR OBERST... THE GUN! QUICKLY!



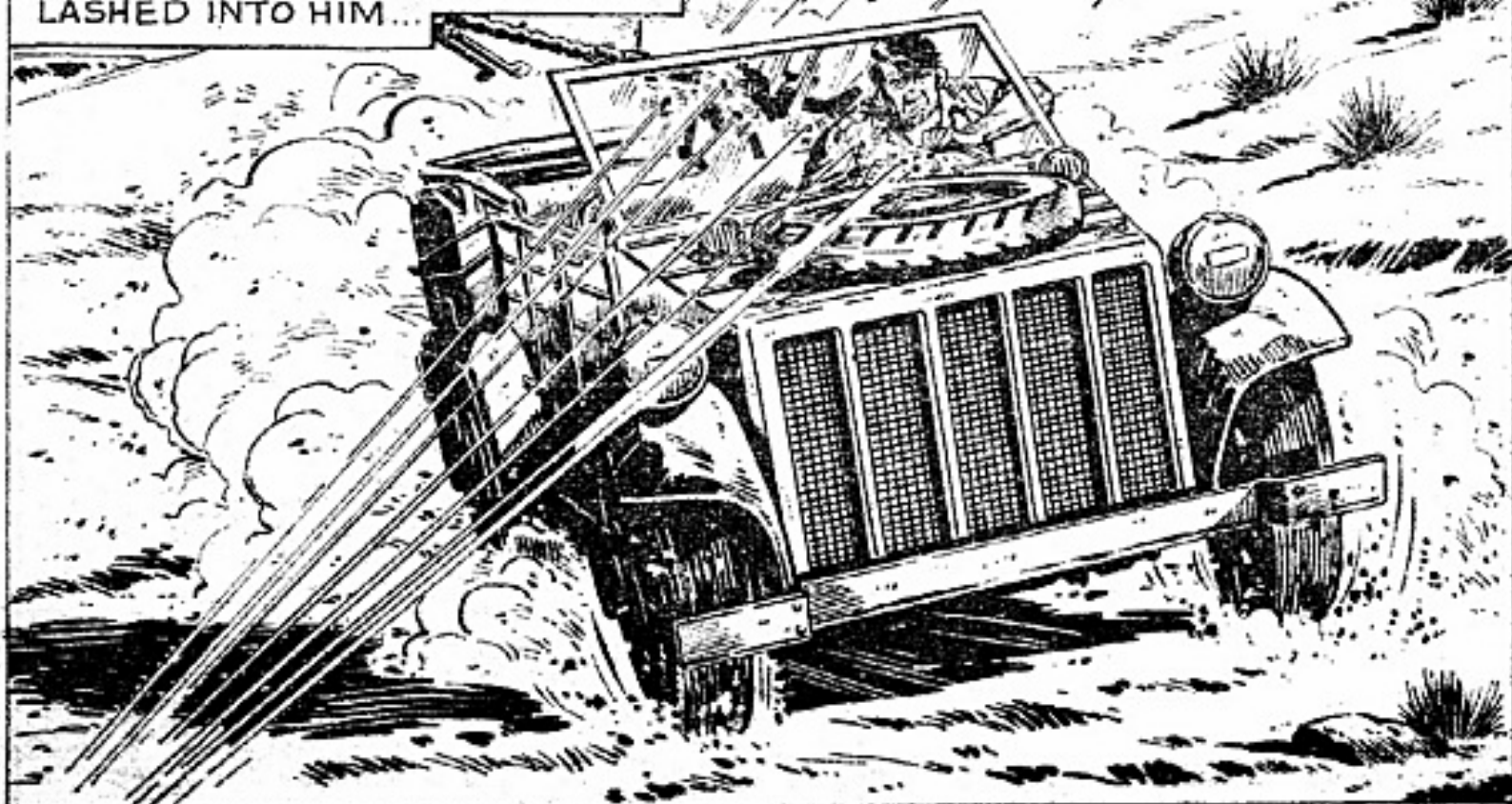
DUFFY'S JAW WAS CLENCHED AS HE HELD THE ROCKING CAR ON ITS COURSE. HE DID NOT CONSIDER THE CONSEQUENCES OF WHAT HE HOPED TO DO. HE THOUGHT ONLY OF A PROUD ARAB WHO HAD DIED TO SAVE HIS LIFE...

HERE IT COMES, JERRY-YER PAYMENT FOR KILLING KASSIM!



DUFFY WAS ONLY TEN YARDS FROM THE GERMAN CAR WHEN THE COLONEL FOUND THE RANGE WITH HIS SPANDAU. THE IRISHMAN LURCHED AS THE BULLETS LASHED INTO HIM...

THIS IS THE WAY IT'S TO BE, DUFFY - FIGHTIN' TO THE LAST...!

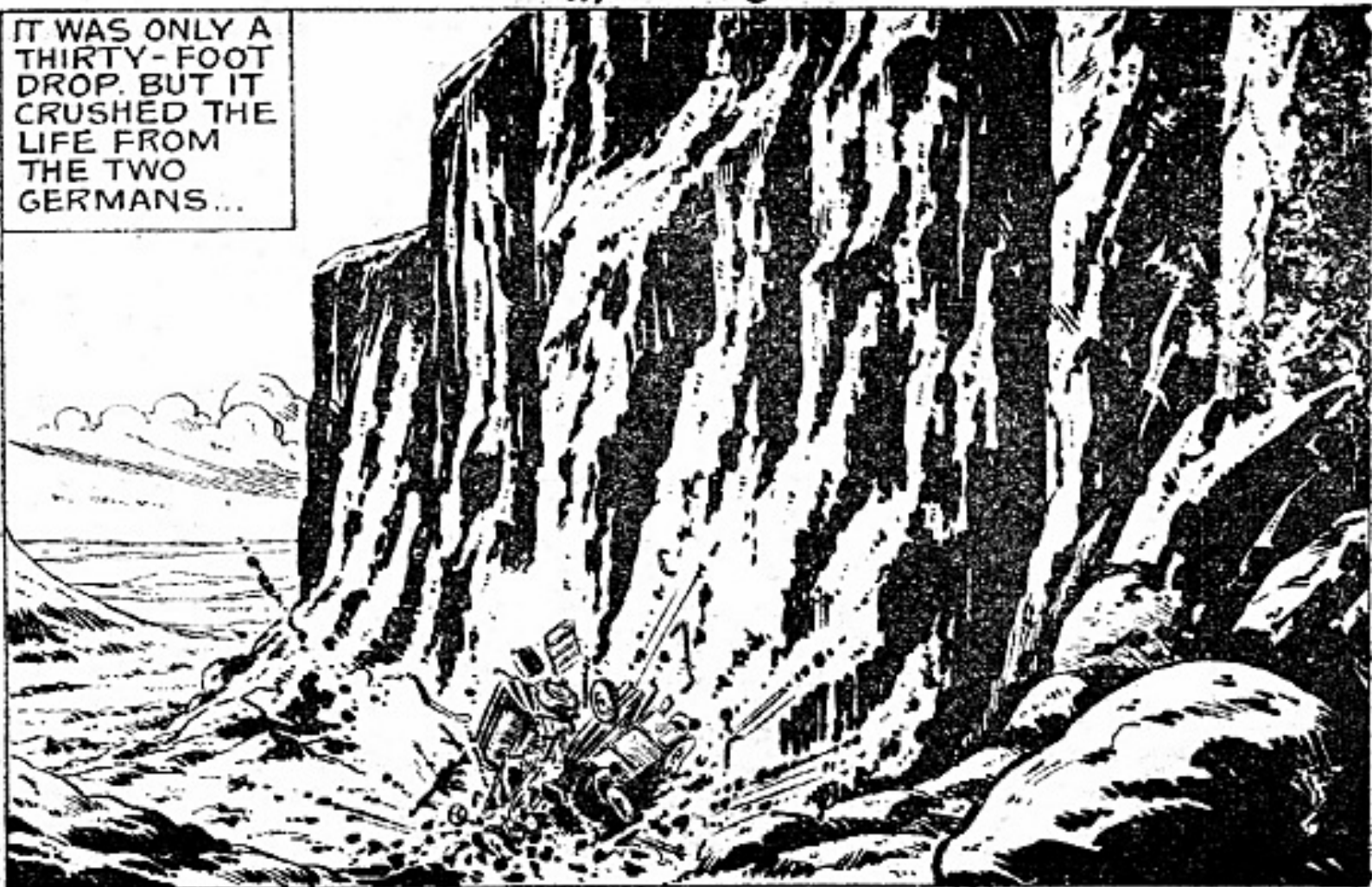


DUFFY WAS DEAD AS THE TWO CARS COLLIDED. HE DID NOT HEAR MAJOR KRANZ SCREAM AS THE LOCKED VEHICLES SLEWED TOWARDS THE SUDDEN SHARP GULLY BETWEEN THE DUNES...

AAARGH!



IT WAS ONLY A THIRTY-FOOT DROP. BUT IT CRUSHED THE LIFE FROM THE TWO GERMANS...



IT WAS SOME TIME LATER THAT THE ARABS FOUND THE BODY OF SERGEANT CON DUFFY IN THE SMOKING CHAOS IN THE RAVINE. TENDERLY, THEY CARRIED HIM BACK TO THE LITTLE VILLAGE IN THE VALLEY. IT WAS THERE THAT THE BIG IRISHMAN FOUND THE PEACE FOR WHICH HE HAD BEEN LOOKING...

THIS BRITISH FLAG, WHICH DUFFY EFFENDI CARRIED, WILL ALWAYS FLY HERE... IN HONOUR OF THE GREATEST LEADER WE EVER HAD...



A FEW DAYS LATER, WHEN BEEF BONE, WINDY GALE, AND SID BEAL MOVED OUT TO REJOIN THEIR WAR, THEY LOOKED BACK AT THE TALL PASS THAT LED TO THE LITTLE VALLEY. THE TATTERED FLAG WAS STILL FLUTTERING BRAVELY ABOVE THE VILLAGE THAT HAD LEARNED TO FIGHT...

DUFFY DIED FIGHTING! HE WOULDN'T HAVE WANTED IT ANY OTHER WAY!

HE DIED FOR PEACE, TOO! PEACE FOR THAT VALLEY OF HIS - DUFFY'S KINGDOM!



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